

# LASCA LEAVES



Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

## GARDEN SHOW 1982

THE BANNERS were yet to be unfurled and the luminarias lit when GARDEN SHOW 1982 opened Oct. 31 for about 2,000 California Arboretum Foundation members and their guests. But by the time dusk settled, the final candle and the last flower had been put in place. Exhibitors had worked steadily during the previous week transforming the Hall of Environmental Education into the Hall of Flowers and the adjacent lawn into 20 garden vignettes decorated with fountains, latticework and statues.

Even frequent visitors had trouble recognizing the show area as part of the familiar Arboretum grounds. The biggest surprise, however, was the small hill that had risen near the entrance to the show. Throughout the nine-day exhibition, visitors followed the walkway up the paved slope and across the medieval-style bridge, complete with colored timbers and fluttering banners, that illustrated the show theme, "A Bridge to Better Gardening."

Bill and Helen Short won the Best of Show award in the display competition with a fantasy landscape of exotic ferns and tropical plants they had grown as a hobby. Judges were Joe Williamson, man-



From left, Cliff Comstock, chairman of the Steering Committee, and Robert H. Kawashima guide the 1983 Rose Queen and her court around the Garden Show 1982.

# GARDEN SHOW

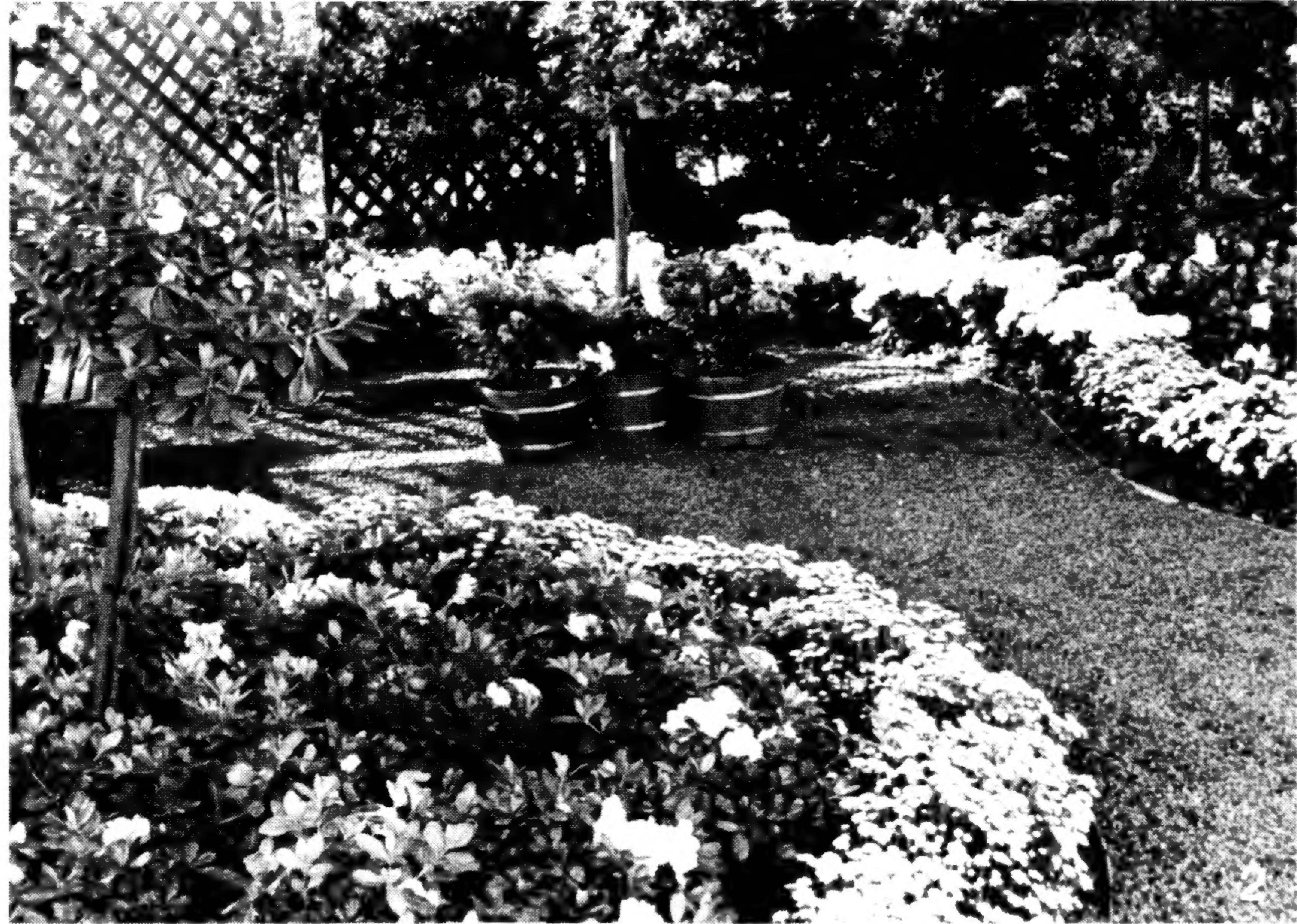
aging editor of *Sunset* magazine; John Clayton, author and staff member at the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley, Surrey, U.K.; Dr. Mildred Mathias, professor emerita of botany at UCLA; Rosemarie Head, secretary of the Southern California Landscape Contractors Association; and George Waters, editor of *Pacific Horticulture* magazine. Major winners were: California Rare Fruit Growers Association — Judges Award and Horticultural Society Educational; Protea from Shirl — Commercial Educational; California State Polytechnic University, Pomona — Education Institution; National Fuchsia Society — Horticultural Society Gar-

den Display; Weidner's Begonia Co. — Commercial Landscape Display; Flowerdale Nurseries — Landscape Display Individual Contractor; and Armstrong Garden Center — Commercial Plant Display.

Cliff Comstock of Monrovia Nursery headed the steering committee that spent months working out details of the show. Enthusiastic public response to their efforts encouraged show sponsors, members of the plant industry, the California Arboretum Foundation and the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, to begin planning to make GARDEN SHOW 1983 the major flower show in the western United States.



# 1982



1. A dragon made of agave leaves lurks among the cactus.

2. Bush and tree azaleas transform even a small yard into a beautifully landscaped garden.

3. A raised bridge leads visitors through this garden display.

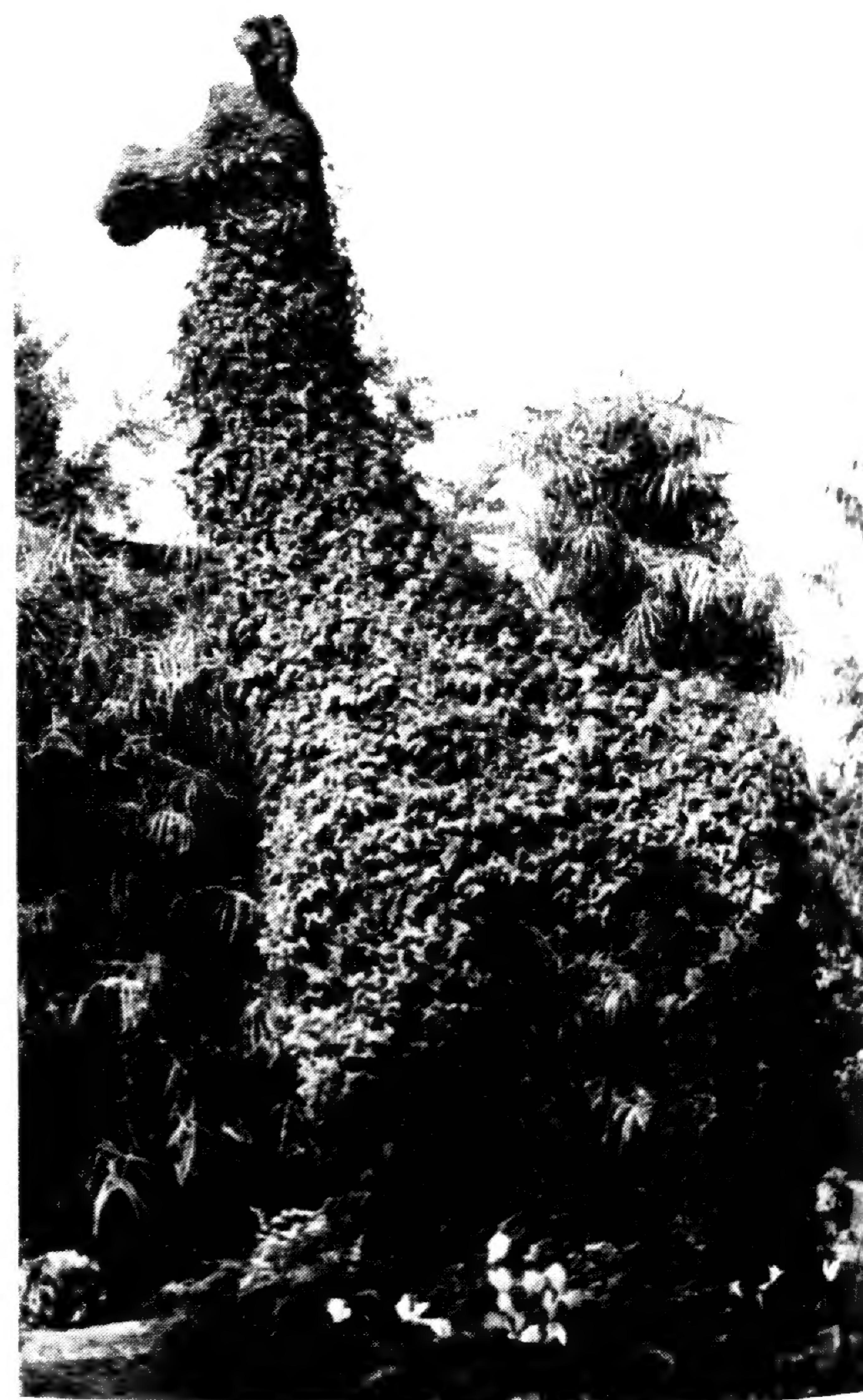
4. Plumes of pampas grass adorn the swan and white peacocks.

5. Bill and Helen Short's fantasy landscape of exotic ferns and tropical plants won the Best of Show award.

(Photos by William Aplin)



Colorful hanging baskets and potted plants surrounding a rose display attract visitors' attention.




A giraffe topiary surveys the exhibits outside of the Hall of Flowers.



Dried flowers and herbs surround a straw man and his lady.

High Tea at

# Virginia Robinson Gardens



**From left** — On behalf of J. W. Robinson, Michael Gould, chief executive officer, presents a \$10,000 check to Joan (Mrs. Paul) Selwyn, Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens president, and Lucy (Mrs. Homer) Toberman,

Virginia Robinson Gardens Foundation president. Third District County Supervisor Ed Edelman presides over the presentation.

(Photo courtesy of J. W. Robinson)

## High Tea at the Gardens

THE WISHES of Virginia Robinson were fulfilled in September four years after her death when Friends of Robinson Gardens celebrated the opening of the garden with a high tea by Trumps. Several dignitaries spoke at the inaugural ceremony held beside the pool.

"Mrs. Robinson told me before her death that she wanted to keep these gardens intact so the public could enjoy them as much as she had," said Francis Ching, Department director. Honorary Friends president, county supervisor Ed Edelman, pointed out that many of the subtropical plants that now grow throughout Los Angeles may be descendants of the experimental specimens first planted in this area by Mrs. Robinson.

Michael Gould, president and chief executive of Robinson's department store chain, presented a \$10,000 check to Joan (Mrs. Paul) Selwyn, founder of the Friends, and Lucy (Mrs. Homer) Toberman, president of the Robinson Garden Foundation. "Robinson's feels a special bond with the gardens . . . and we have a social obligation to the community to give back some of the goodies . . . , " he said. The firm's historical involvement with the gardens will continue, Mr. Gould said, when Robinson's underwrites the Friends' major benefit event this spring.



**Upper right** — Urns of colorful bougainvilleas decorate the guest pavilion.

**Right** — Funds raised by the Friends will maintain the many fountains in the garden.



*Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens gather for high tea to celebrate the opening of the gardens and applaud the hard work that made it possible.*

*Celebrants are welcomed to high tea in front of the guest pavilion where Mrs. Robinson held similar gatherings for more than 60 years.*



## New on our Shelves

**Wild Food in Australia**, 240 pages, illustrated, \$6.50 paperback. **Useful Wild Plants in Australia**, 269 pages, illustrated, \$17.50, hardbound.

Both books by A. B. and J. W. Cribb, published by Collins Australia; U.S. distributor, International Scholarly Book Services, Inc.

MANY OF THE NATIVE PLANTS of Australia that evolved during its isolation from other continents were staples in the diets of the first human inhabitants there. A.B. and J.W. Cribb have collaborated on two books that describe Australian plants that can still be useful today. In compiling these books, the husband and wife team of botanists studied the primitive foraging culture of the Aborigines and accounts by early explorers to supplement their own experiences.

In *Wild Foods in Australia* they describe plants, water sources and animals the Aborigines used and briefly explain how to extract the useful portions from the plants. The authors have produced a comprehensive, well illustrated guide for locating, identifying and preparing edible wild plants. Detailed instructions for food preparation make this

book intriguing, although the authors claim only that the results are edible, not necessarily tasty.

They also include humorous anecdotes about instances when they tried to duplicate the Aborigines' methods and failed. They said that while attempting to suck nectar from eucalyptus flowers, they "ended up with a mouthful of loose stamens and not much nectar."

Accounts of the ingenuity the Aborigines showed in their search for food and in their gathering methods make this book a fascinating lesson on their primitive culture as well as a vehicle to make the reader aware of the diverse uses of plants. For example, in arid regions the Aborigines often survived for months on water they drained from the roots of plants and the dew they collected using balls of grass as sponges.

The non-food uses the Aborigines devised for native plants are described in *Useful Wild Plants in Australia*. The book gives practical instructions on how to use Australian plants for dyeing, tanning, braiding ropes and making a natural shampoo. Although readers will probably continue using mass pro-

duced products in daily life, the idea of coloring cloth or making insect repellent sachets from materials gathered in the backyard may appeal to enterprising Southern Californians.

The more arcane uses the Aborigines found for plants — face and body paint, candles, fish hooks and tobacco pipes — illustrate the creativity of the early cultures rather than offering practical information.

The authors experimented with native plants and concluded that, although the Aborigines' methods could work today, they are not economically or ecologically sound. The plant communities could not regenerate fast enough to withstand constant harvesting if a large percentage of the population turned to foraging. The authors, therefore, encourage readers to experiment but not depend on wild plants.

The Cribbs leavened botanical information with humor and interesting historical and personal tales to produce two reference books that are also interesting browsing material. Southern California gardeners will see common Australian plants from a new perspective after reading these books.

### LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, Arcadia

**JANUARY 23** — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Gladiolus Bulb Sale  
So. Calif. Gladiolus Society

**JANUARY 29, 30** — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Winter Silhouettes" Bonsai Show  
Baiko-en Kenyukai Bonsai Society

**FEBRUARY 12, 13** — Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.

Sun. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Camellia Show  
Temple City Camellia Society

**MARCH 5, 6** — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Girl Scout Flower Show  
Sierra Madres Girl Scout Council

**MARCH 12** — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Environmental Education Fair  
Hosted by L.A. State & County Arboretum

**MARCH 26** — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Herbal Symposium — Display  
Herb Society of America  
All events sponsored by the California Arboretum Foundation

### CALENDAR

#### JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, 1983

#### DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada

**JANUARY 8** — 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Rose pruning demonstration  
George Lewis, superintendent

**MARCH 5, 6** — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Camellia Show  
So. Calif. Camellia Society

**MARCH 12, 13** — Sat. 12 to 5 p.m.

Sun. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Daffodil Show  
So. Calif. Daffodil Society  
All events sponsored by the Descanso Gardens Guild

#### SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, Palos Verdes Peninsula

**JANUARY 9** — 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Fruit tree pruning demonstration  
Ed Hartnagel, superintendent

**JANUARY 16** — 2 p.m.

Rose pruning demonstration  
South Coast Rose Society

**JANUARY 23** — 2 p.m.

Talk — Cooking with herbs  
Betty Evans, food editor

**JANUARY 29, 30** — Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.

Sun. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Camellia Show

South Coast Camellia Society

**FEBRUARY 6** — 2 p.m.

Slides — Sea of Cortez  
Don Walker, So. Cal. Horticultural Institute

**FEBRUARY 13** — 2 p.m.

Talk — Fuchsia pruning  
Ida Drapkin

**FEBRUARY 20** — 2 p.m.

Talk — Backyard orchids  
Bill Bailey, Bill Bailey Orchids

**FEBRUARY 27** — 2 p.m.

Talk — Camellia cultivation  
Mazie Jean George  
All events sponsored by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation